



SOUTH CAROLINA YOUTH SOCCER

2008/2009 SC YOUTH SOCCER AMERICAN CUP MANUAL



1. PURPOSE

This manual documents the methods, procedures, and guidelines used to stage the SC Youth Soccer American Cup. These annual competitions decide which teams are SC Youth Soccer American Cup Champions. In order to continue to improve the games, this manual may be updated by a majority vote of the SC Youth Soccer Board of Directors.

2. SCOPE

This manual is applicable to the annual U10, U11, U12, U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U18 and U19 SC Youth Soccer American Cup. The U15-U19 competitions will be held at the end of the fall season and the U10- U14 competitions will be held at the end of the spring season. The U10-U12 American Cup competitions will be held in conjunction with the Palmetto Classic Cup at the end of the spring season. Dates, times and the locations of the Cup will be set by the SC Youth Soccer Board of Directors and posted on the SC Youth Soccer website.

3. APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS

FIFA Laws of the Game as amended annually
USSF Official Administrative Rule Book as amended annually
Policy on US Youth Soccer National Championships as amended annually
SC Youth Soccer Bylaws
SC Youth Soccer Administrative Manual
SC Youth Soccer Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
SC Youth Soccer Annual Calendar

4. COMPETITION DIVISIONS AND AGE GROUPS

SC Youth Soccer American Cup Games are comprised of the following competition divisions and age groups:
Girls and Boys Recreation Teams U10 – U19. The winner of each division shall be the SC Youth Soccer American Cup Champion. More than one division winner could be necessary.

5. FEES

Fees for entry into the SC Youth Soccer American Cup are set prior to the cup by the SC Youth Soccer Board of Directors and will be listed on the SC Youth Soccer American Cup entry form and the SC Youth Soccer website.

6. PERFORMANCE BOND

Each team participating in the SC Youth Soccer American Cup shall post a performance bond in addition to the team's registration fee. This performance bond must be in the form of a check payable to SC Youth Soccer with the name of the team placed on the check. The bond check will be destroyed at the conclusion of the team's last game or required activity (e.g. awards ceremony).

A team's performance bond will be forfeited by:

1. Improper registration.
2. Failure to have an adult representative at the coaches meeting prior to the SC Youth Soccer American Cup.
3. Failure to be ready to play at the scheduled time plus grace period of ten minutes for any game.
4. Failure to participate in the entire awards ceremony if that team is a participant in the championship game.
5. Once a team has declared its intent to play, any failure to appear at Cup matches may result in the loss of the team's bond.
6. If a performance bond is forfeited, then a new performance bond must be posted before the team may continue as a part of the SC Youth Soccer American Cup.

7. PLAYER/COACH PASSES

Each player, coach and assistant coach in the American Cup must have an official US Youth Soccer pass (ID card). The pass shall have the player/coach signature, the signature of the State Registrar/designee, and a current photograph of the player/coach permanently attached. Players/coaches may not be photographed in hats or headbands. Laminated player passes are required. NO pass – NO play. Each team roster must have a coach designated as a head coach while all others are assistant coaches. Only four people holding coaching passes may be on a team bench with players during a American Cup match.

8. TEAM ROSTERS

All U13 – U19 teams entering this competition must obtain an official SC Youth Soccer State Roster, signed and sealed by the SC Youth Soccer State Registrar/designee, prior to the SC Youth Soccer American Cup. All U10-U12 teams entering this competition must obtain either an official SC Youth Soccer State Roster or SC Youth Soccer Tournament Team Roster, signed and sealed by the SC Youth

Soccer State Registrar/designee prior to the SC Youth Soccer American Cup. The Roster shall list the team coach, assistants and all team players. Rosters are frozen at a date chosen by the SC Youth Soccer Board of Directors. No player may be added or transferred on to a team after the team roster is frozen. No player may participate in more than one (1) State Cup tournament in a seasonal year.

9. PLAYER EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

All teams shall wear matching uniforms consisting of jersey, shorts, and socks. Every field player shall have a unique and identifiable number attached to his/her jersey. Additional garments may be worn to protect against the elements, but all players must present a uniform appearance and all extra clothing is subject to the approval of the referee. Socks must be pulled up over each player's shin guards and all shirts must remain tucked in for the duration of all matches. No jewelry of any type may be worn during a match under any circumstances. All players, including the goalkeeper, must wear shin guards during the duration of all matches. Additional equipment or clothing worn to reduce the chance of injury or to protect existing injuries shall be used only with the approval of the referee. The referee is the sole judge of whether player equipment, casts, or protective or other assistant devices shall be allowed as prescribed in the FIFA "Laws of the Game". In general, hard casts will be allowed only if they are (a) wrapped in their entirety with a half inch of foam or other cushioning material and (b) are, in the opinion of the referee, safe. At the first indication that a player with a cast or other protective device is using it in an unsafe manner, or to gain an advantage, the player shall be removed from the match not to return for the duration of the competition, or until the cast or device has been removed.

Should the referee in any match determine that the equipment worn by a player does not meet the FIFA criteria as documented for non-dangerous player equipment, and prevents the player from match participation, that referee shall be required to submit a written report to the Tournament Committee detailing the reason(s) for the decision. The report is to be submitted within two hours of the match's completion.

10. TEAM ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the SC Youth Soccer American Cup, a team must be comprised of properly registered and rostered youth players and the team and its SC Youth Soccer affiliated organization must be in good standing with SC Youth Soccer.

The use of tryouts, invitations, recruiting or any like process to roster players selectively to any team on the basis of talent or ability is prohibited by SC Youth Soccer and renders a team ineligible for the SC Youth Soccer American Cup, with the exception of U10 teams playing in the Academy Division.

11. FORMAT

Each district may send as many teams as they wish to participate in the SC Youth Soccer American Cup. These teams will be placed in up to a 12- team division. If more than 12 teams apply to participate, then a second division will be set up and an even number placed in the two divisions. All teams will be placed in each division and bracket based on a blind draw.

12. TEAM PARTICIPATION

The SC Youth Soccer American Cup will allow ALL recreation teams requesting and meeting all requirements to participate and compete for the Championship in their division provided there are enough teams (minimum of three teams) to form a division. SC Youth Soccer requires each player play at least one-half (1/2) of each game except for reasons of injury, illness, or discipline.

13. PAIRINGS

The following pairing arrangements shall be used in the SC Youth Soccer American Cup:

Three Team Division:

These teams will play a three team round robin to determine the top two teams of the division. The top teams with the highest point total will play for the championship. If there is a three way tie, then a three way kicks from the penalty mark will be conducted to determine the top two teams.

Four Team Division:

These teams will play a four team round robin. The two teams with the highest point total will play for the championship.

Five Team Division:

These teams will play a five team round robin; the champion will be the team with the highest point total at the end of round-robin play. If there is no outright point winner at the conclusion of the round-robin play, the winner will be established using the Divisional Tie-Breaking Procedure.

Six Team Division:

These teams will be placed into two three team brackets. These brackets will each play a three team round robin and one crossover match. Crossover matches will be as follows: 1 vs 5, 2 vs 6, 3 vs 4. The team from each bracket with the highest point total will play for the championship.

Eight Team Division:

These teams will be placed in two four-team brackets. Each bracket will play a four team round robin and the team from each bracket with the highest point total will play for the championship.

Nine Team Division:

These teams will be placed into three, three-team brackets. These brackets will each play a three team round-robin. The team from each bracket with the highest point total plus a wild card team will advance to semifinal play. The wild card team will be determined by game points earned during bracket play. In the event there is a tie for the Wild Card spot, the Divisional Tie Breaking Procedure will be used. (A vs wildcard [unless the wildcard is from the A bracket then it will be the C bracket winner], B vs C [unless wildcard is from the A bracket then B will play the wildcard].) The semifinal winners will play for the championship.

Ten Team Division:

These teams will be divided into two divisions of five teams each.

Eleven Team Division:

These teams will be divided into one five team division and one six team division.

Twelve Team Division:

These teams shall be placed in four; three team brackets, A, B, C and D. These brackets will each play a three-team round robin. The team from each bracket with the highest point total will advance to semifinal play (i.e. A vs D and B vs C). The semifinal winners will play for the championship.

14. DETERMINATION OF SEMI-FINAL WINNERS

Semifinal matches shall be played to a conclusion, including overtime periods. If the teams are still tied after two overtime periods the match will be decided by kicks from the penalty mark using FIFA guidelines with only those players on the field at the conclusion of play eligible to participate.

15. DETERMINATION OF CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS

Championship matches shall be played to a conclusion, including overtime periods. If the teams are still tied after two overtime periods the match will be decided by kicks from the penalty mark using FIFA guidelines with only those players on the field at the conclusion of play eligible to participate.

16. DECORUM

Coaches are responsible for the behavior of all players, coaches, parents, and spectators associated with their team. Coaches and their players shall be located on the opposite side of the field from the parents and fans.

The only persons allowed on the team bench during a SC Youth Soccer American Cup match are those players/coaches/assistant coaches listed on the approved Official SC Youth Soccer State Roster, with a maximum of four (4) coaches/assistants. All players and coaches shall have approved SC Youth Soccer player/coach passes and must be checked in at the field by a tournament official before being allowed on the bench.

The only exceptions to this rule shall be:

- Any medical emergency requiring additional assistance, and
- During half-time visitors may approach the team bench with approval of the tournament official.

Upon verification by a tournament official or their designee, any team with unauthorized persons at their team bench when the match begins or at the start of the second half shall result in the coach for that team paying a \$50 fine to the tournament director at the conclusion of the match. This fine must be paid before the coach will be allowed to coach another match.

17. DETERMINATION OF DIVISION (BRACKET) STANDINGS

During divisional (bracket) play, teams will be awarded game points as follows:

- Three (3) points for a win
- One (1) point for a tie
- Zero (0) points for a loss

18. DISMISSALS

If a player/coach/ is dismissed from any match, the player/coach pass, together with the game report of the incident, shall be turned over to the Tournament Committee or its designee by the referee. The minimum penalty for a dismissal is that the player/coach shall not be permitted to participate in the remainder of the current match and the entirety of the team's next match. This penalty may be increased at the discretion of the Tournament Committee. If the red card/ejection was given in the last game of state cup, then the player/coach will sit out the first of subsequent league play and the first game of any state cup in the next seasonal year (no matter which club he/she played/is playing for). The club and District shall be notified of the red card/ejection by the Tournament Committee. The player/coach pass shall be returned following the disciplinary period. If a coach is "sent off", he/she will not be allowed to return to any venue of that SC Youth Soccer American Cup in any capacity for the duration of the suspension.

19. DIVISIONAL TIE BREAKING PROCEDURE

Standings at the conclusion of division (bracket) play will be determined on the basis of game points. In the event of ties, standings will be established using the following tie breaking criteria in sequence until a winner has been determined:

1. Winner of head to head competition. (This criteria is not used if more than two teams are tied. See below).
2. Most wins.
3. Teams with the greatest net goal difference (NGD) which is computed as “goals for” minus “goals against” with a maximum of 3 NGD per game.
4. Team with the least goals against (there is NO limit on the number of goals that will be counted to determine this tiebreaker).
5. Team with the most goals (maximum of 3 goals per game).
6. Kicks from the penalty mark per FIFA Laws.

More than two teams tied:

If more than two (2) teams are tied, the sequence will start at 19.2 and will be followed until a team is eliminated. When a team is eliminated the remaining teams will then restart the sequence at 19.2 above until the tie is broken.

If three teams are still tied after computing the listed tiebreakers and FIFA Kicks have to be taken, there will be a draw by the Tournament Committee. The first team drawn will receive the bye. The next team drawn will be the home team against the remaining team in the first contest of FIFA Kicks. The winner of the first contest will then compete against the bye team in FIFA Kicks to determine the winner. The bye team will be the home team.

If four teams are still tied after computing the listed tiebreakers and FIFA Kicks have to be taken there will be a draw conducted by the Tournament Committee. The first team drawn (home team) will compete against the second team drawn (away team) in the first contest of FIFA Kicks. The third team drawn (home team) will compete against the fourth team (away team) in the second contest. The winners of these two contests will then compete to determine the winner. The winner of the first /second draw will be the home team.

20. ADEQUATE REST

All teams are entitled to sufficient and, to the extent practical, equal rest between matches. A minimum of three hours between the scheduled start of two successive matches is considered to be sufficient rest. Where field or bracketing limitations make equal rest impossible, a minimum of three hours between the scheduled start of two successive matches is also considered to be equal rest.

21. FORFEITS

A team which forfeits any game shall have the scores of ALL of its games recorded as 0-3 losses, thereby awarding every other team it played a 3-0 win over the forfeiting team.

22. GAME BALLS

Game balls provided by tournament sponsors and approved by the Tournament Committee and referee shall be used for the entirety of all matches if they are available. Each team shall also furnish a playable game ball to the referee at the beginning of each match. Size four balls will be used for all U10-U12 matches. Size five balls will be used for all U13-U19 matches.

23. ROSTER SIZE AND FORMAT

<u>Age Division</u>	<u>Maximum Roster Size</u>	<u>Game Format</u>	<u>Minimum # of Players to Start/Complete Match</u>
U13-U19	18	11 v 11	7
U11-U12	14	8 v 8	7
U10	12	6 v 6	5

24. GRACE PERIODS

Teams not ready to play within 10 minutes after the scheduled starting time of any match shall forfeit the match. Any team that is not ready to play after this 10- minute grace period shall be reported to the Tournament Committee or its designee by the referee. The game shall be recorded as a forfeit (3-0 win for the non-forfeiting team). The team not ready to play shall forfeit its performance bond.

25. HOME TEAM

The team listed first in each pairing on the schedule is the home team. The home team shall change jerseys if, in the opinion of the referee, there is a color conflict.

26. LENGTH OF MATCHES AND OVERTIME PERIODS

Under 19: Two 45-minute halves, two 10-minute overtimes, if applicable*

Under 18: Two 45-minute halves, two 10-minute overtimes, if applicable*
Under 17: Two 45-minute halves, two 10-minute overtimes, if applicable*
Under 16: Two 40-minute halves, two 10-minute overtimes, if applicable*
Under 15: Two 40-minute halves, two 10-minute overtimes, if applicable*
Under 14: Two 35-minute halves, two 10-minute overtimes, if applicable*
Under 13: Two 35-minute halves, two 10-minute overtimes, if applicable*
Under 12: Two 30-minute halves, two 5-minute overtimes, if applicable*
Under 11: Two 30-minute halves, two 5-minute overtimes, if applicable*
Under 10: Two 25-minute halves, two 5-minute overtimes, if applicable*

*In divisional (bracket) play, the score at the end of regulation time shall stand, unless otherwise noted. If any semifinal or final match is tied at the end of regulation play, two (2) full overtime periods as outlined above will be played. If the match remains tied, kicks will be taken from the penalty mark using FIFA guidelines with only those players on the field at the conclusion of play eligible to participate.

If a match is abandoned by the referee for any reason not related to the performance of a team, it shall be replayed in its entirety if the second half of play has not begun - after the second half has begun the score will stand. If a match is abandoned for cause due to actions of a team, coach, parent, or spectator, the Tournament Committee shall determine whether to allow the score at the time of termination to stand, to forfeit the match in favor of the non-offending team, or to replay the match in its entirety. The referee shall report, with explanation, all abandoned games to the Tournament Committee or its designee within one hour of the termination.

27. PROTESTS

All questions relating to the qualifications of the competitors or interpretation of the rules, or any dispute or protest whatever, shall be referred to the Tournament Committee or its designee. The Tournament Committee shall then refer the protest to a protest and appeals committee appointed by the Tournament Committee. The decisions of the latter committee shall be binding on both teams.

To be valid and eligible for consideration, each protest must (1)(a) if involving the field of play, be lodged verbally with the referee and the opposing coach at the game site before entering the field of play, (b) be filed within 30 minutes of the conclusion of the game with an SC Youth Soccer tournament official and (2) be filed in writing with the SC Youth Soccer tournament official and include a protest fee in the amount of \$250.00 (cash, cashier's check, or money order only), five written copies of the protest (which must include a description of the grounds on which the protest is lodged), and five written copies of any information to be presented by witnesses.

All written copies of the protests must be received by the Tournament Committee or its designee within two hours of the completion of the game being protested.

All protests relating to the grounds, goal posts, bars, or other appurtenances of the game shall be entertained only if a written objection has been lodged with the referee and the opposing coach at the start of the game.

The Tournament Committee shall immediately upon receipt of a protest notify the team against which the protest is made and shall send a copy of the protest and all particulars to that team which will then have the right to defend its case with or without witnesses, should it desire to do so.

A lawyer shall not represent a team at the hearing of a charge or protest unless he is a bonafide member of one of the teams concerned (coach or assistant coach as specified on a team's SC Youth Soccer State Roster).

A plea of ignorance to the rules and regulations of the competition is not sufficient grounds for protests.

Judgment decisions of the referee are not subject to appeal or protest.

28. RULES OF COMPETITION

All SC Youth Soccer American Cup matches will be conducted in accordance with FIFA's "Laws of the Game" and the SC Youth Soccer Administrative Manual (including all SC Youth Soccer Board of Directors updates).

29. SUBSTITUTIONS

Substitutions may be made, with the consent of the referee, at the following times:

- Prior to a throw-in in your favor.
- Prior to a goal kick by either team.
- After a goal by either team.
- After an injury by either team when the referee stops play (unlimited substitutions).
- At the beginning of the second half
- When the referee stops play to caution a player, only the cautioned player may be substituted prior to the restart of the game.